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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6954  
INFO RUCNFUR/DARFUR COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 NDJAMENA 000197

SIPDIS  
SENSITIVE

DOHA FOR SE GRATION  
STATE FOR AF/C, S/USSES  
NSC FOR GAVIN  
LONDON FOR POL - LORD  
PARIS FOR POL - D'ELIA AND KANEDA  
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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: JEM-SLA/AW ALLIANCE OFFER ON THE TABLE, BUT IN THE  
CARDS?

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SUMMARY  
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11. (SBU) JEM and SLA/AW leaders met north of N'Djamena May 22 to discuss forming a political alliance, according to a JEM member who spoke with poloff May 25. SLA/AW leaders told us that that the difference between the secular SLA and the Islamist JEM would likely prevent an alliance, although the SLA respected JEM as a movement. The SLA/AW leaders admitted to vigorous internal debate but claimed that all of them remained loyal to Abdul Wahid. The JEM side told poloff that they had had offered the possibility of an alliance to SLA/AW, including the options for a new name and shared leadership structure for the movement. JEM felt that SLA/AW itself remained divided and would not be able to come to a decision on aligning with JEM. We detected interest on both sides, but it is unclear whether JEM and SLA/AW will align despite the advantages an alliance brings to each group. END SUMMARY.

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SLA/AW STILL UNIFIED...  
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12. (SBU) Abdallah Harran, Sudanese Liberation Army/Abdul Wahid faction (SLA/AW) political leader, Nimeri Issa Mousa, SLA/AW Humanitarian Coordinator, and spokesman Nimir Mohamed met poloff May 23 to discuss SLA's plans and goals for Sudan.

Harran and Mousa commented on the recent SLA workshop in Switzerland with Abdul Wahid, stating that the participants had vigorous discussion but that all participants, including representatives from IDP and refugee camps, remained unified under Abdul Wahid. Mousa added that themes of the workshop centered on inclusion, openness, and development of international relations. The SLA members also stated that SLA/AW did not want to participate in Doha for two reasons. They said that they did not believe the Government of Sudan to be an honest participant or sincere in finding a solution to the crisis in Darfur. They added that they felt that the Abuja peace agreement had been a mistake, leaving Minni Minnawi without any power at all.

13. (SBU) Harran, by way of Mousa's Arabic-to-English translation, stated that he and his team were in N'Djamena for "work" and discussed why SLA/AW and JEM could never form an alliance. Harran said that SLA stood for human rights,

democracy, federalism, liberalism, and secularism and agreed that JEM pursued most of those principles as well. He added that SLA respected JEM as a movement but could not align its secular belief with JEM's Islamist one. He made clear, however, that the two movements had an "understanding" that neither would attack the other. Harran said that JEM may currently have the military might to assert that it was the main rebel power on the ground, but he claimed that the people of Sudan viewed JEM as creating confusion, not peace. Harran felt that JEM would say whatever was expedient to achieve its aim of unifying all rebels groups but not really change its true intentions. By comparison, Harran stated that SLA/AW wanted to achieve its aims through negotiation, not by compromising its principles.

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BUT NOT WITH JEM  
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¶4. (SBU) JEM Economic Advisor Bushara Suleiman Nour told poloff May 25 that JEM and SLA/AW had held a four-on-four May 22 meeting north of N'Djamena to discuss a possible alliance between the two rebel movements. Nour said that he and Sulieman Jamous were among the four JEM participants and that Harran and Mousa were among the four on the SLA/AW side. Nour stated that both sides had been interested in meeting and that JEM offered the possibility of an alliance. He said that he had told the SLA/AW representatives that JEM was ready to take whatever steps necessary to make an alliance possible, including a new name and leadership structure. Nour said that the SLA was indecisive and that the group had replied that it needed to discuss JEM's proposal with other commanders. Nour had the impressions that the SLA/AW was a

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divided group with some elements ready to join JEM. He also said SLA/AW had minimal resources and equipment and believed that SLA/AW would not flourish without the return of Abdul Wahid to Darfur, something Nour felt would never happen.

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COMMENT  
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¶5. (SBU) We detected interest on both sides, but it is unclear whether SLA/AW will come to a final decision about aligning with JEM. SLA/AW would benefit from JEM's military strength and resources, as well as its experience at the negotiating table in Doha. A JEM alliance with SLA/AW would gain JEM credibility and connection with Darfur's Fur people. We will remain in touch with both groups to follow up on developments. END COMMENT.

¶6. (U) Minimize considered.  
NIGRO